



## Walloon case: Waste reduction at Stabilame

### 1. Context

The Riche Group is now made up of three companies: Menuiserie Riche (windows and doors, since 1970), Stabilame (wooden houses, since 1989) and Enercobois (since 2006). The group aims to cover the whole timber construction chain, from secondary processing (sawing) to the assembly of wooden houses: post-and-beam, timber frame, stacked board, nailed (2007) and glued (2014) CLT (cross-laminated timber).

In 2020, Stabilame won the *Fibre d'Or*, a biennial award for innovation in the wood sector, for its curved CLTs that allow optimal use of the raw material while reducing low-value by-products and eliminating all waste.

### 2. Business model

Stabilame sources 60% of its wood from forests in Wallonia and the rest from European forests as nearby as possible. The company supplies the Belgian, French and Quebec markets. Waste has regularly been reduced and whatever remains from its sites is recycled as close to the source as possible.

Stabilame has developed its products to meet the needs of all types of wooden construction, focusing on the low footprint of its construction activity, both in production (short cycles, reuse, recycling, energy recovery, no waste), and in use (insulation).

### 3. Innovation and key success factors in the circular economy

Well established in their respective activities, but always centred around wood, Menuiserie Riche and Stabilame have always used biomass to heat their buildings. In 2005, they began recycling wood waste that was very dry and often resinous, developing a production line for compressed logs optimised for minimal use of storage space in winter. This line is marketed through Enercobois, a complementary activity selling wooden logs.

Optimised use of logs: scanning and analysis upon reception → quality and defects identified → sorting and precision cutting → optimal processing for different types of products. Even the spurs are used in parts of the woodwork that are not visible. No waste at all is produced in the construction or joinery workshops. Waste from the building sites (breakages, packaging, etc.) is sorted and recovered by the closest possible suppliers or partner companies.

Stabilame's CLTs have thus been granted the labels of bio-sourced products (98% of material for the glued CLTs and 99% of material for the nailed CLT come from biomass) and short-cycle products (more than 90% of the CLTs originate from Wallonia).

In addition to reducing the carbon footprint through short supply chains and the quality of processes, the materials produced allow the construction of passive or even positive energy buildings.

### 4. Constraints and lessons learnt

A main constraint for working with other woods than softwoods, are the classifications or lack of classifications for other wood species, such as poplar.

Technical centres increasingly want to standardise: this is positive, but it can also curb innovations and possibilities for evolution.

Lessons for the development of the sector:

We need to digitize as much as possible, while retaining knowledge of the subject, of the profession, and keeping people at the center of knowledge and work. It is also advisable to take advantage of all the innovations in the wood but also in the associated sectors: fixings, industrial digitalisation and 3D drawings. Our companies are in a period of environmental, digital and industrial transitions and all professions have to go through the three of them simultaneously.

## 5. Contact(s)

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Post and beam, European PEFC wood



Glued CLT, local bio-sourced product